

24 March 1959  
CIA/ER G/I 59-25

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant to the DD/I (NSC and National Estimates)

SUBJECT: The Proposed Soviet Antarctic Station at the  
Bellinghausean Sea

1. Development of the Bellinghausean Plan:

- a. At the SCAR meetings, Moscow, August 1958, and subsequently repeated in several places, high-level Soviet plans for an expanded post-IGY Antarctic program were announced. Station plans included the continued push to the station at the Pole of Relative Inaccessibility and the establishment of two other stations: the "Lazaryev" station on the Queen Maud Coast, and the "Bellinghausean" station at the Bellinghausean Sea; trans-continental traverses were also announced, one from Mirny to Bellinghausean station being specified.
- b. In mid-September 1958, operational priorities were indicated as follows:
  - (1) The Lazaryev and Bellinghausean stations would be established in 1958-59.
  - (2) The first traverse would be in 1959-60 from Mirny to Lazaryev, via the three Poles.
  - (3) The originally announced traverse from Mirny to Bellinghausean would be later, subsequent to establishment of the Bellinghausean station.
- c. In consultations in Washington in October, M. M. Somov (Deputy Director of the Arctic and Antarctic Scientific and Research Institute) reviewed the long-range plan, stating that work would proceed as rapidly as feasible; he reiterated at that time that the Bellinghausean phase of the plan would be pursued.
- d. The establishment of both Lazaryev and Bellinghausean this season was precluded by the elimination in early November of one of the two ships scheduled for the work.

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e. All other announced plans were accomplished this season: stations were established at the Pole of Relative Inaccessibility and at Lazaryev, and the first leg of the trans-antarctic traverse reached Komsomolskaya 26 February 1959 in readiness for the spring season.

2. Reasons for assuming that the Bellinghauseen plan will be completed:

- a. The Soviets have carried out every plan announced during their three previous seasons of operating in the Antarctic, and much of their intentions for this fourth season. Alterations in announced plans have been in scheduling, not in failure to fulfill announced objectives.
- b. The approaches to the Amundsen-Bellinghauseen area have already been penetrated by the Ob in the 1957-58 season, and it was after their findings there that they announced the Bellinghauseen plan.
- c. Fixed-wing aircraft, carried on the Ob, have been used extensively in previous coastal surveys, permitting penetration into the coastal zone in areas of difficult ice. This increases their capabilities to establish a station well inland of the shelf ice.
- d. The advantages to the Soviets of a base on the Bellinghauseen coast would be numerous:
  - (1) A link between current Soviet activities and early Tsarist discoveries in the area.
  - (2) A Soviet foothold in the Unclaimed Sector, (thus far explored only by the United States) to challenge primacy of U.S. rights.
  - (3) Propaganda value from associated scientific results.
  - (4) An extension of Russian activities to the opposite side of the continent from their previous work, and in close proximity to Latin America.
- e. The Soviets, according to Somo, have no problem of funds, transportation, or personnel for Antarctic work; apparently their only limitations are the physical environment and the degree of achievement deemed necessary to attain their scientific and political objectives.

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- f. An indication of the Soviet long-range intent in the Antarctic is reflected in the reorganization of governmental control from a temporary to permanent management: the Arctic Scientific Research Institute has been broadened to the Arctic and Antarctic Scientific Research Institute of the Ministry of the Maritime Fleet, and an Interdepartmental Antarctic Commission has been formalized under the presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

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